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CAST YOUR CLOUTS

REMEMBER that Victory May Day, 1945? Never was there a more lovely spring day, blossoming over all the bloodshed, loss, torture and destruction. That delicately perfect May Day was Peace—and the chance to build a lasting one. It was Progress—and the challenge to move on toward Socialism with no more bloodshed. You would catch sight of men and women suddenly turning away, for a moment overcome by the immense hope of that challenge. Thinking of those who would not come home, except as a memory and inspiration, to share it. Longing for the presence of others still overseas in jungle or desert. One of these, an airman in the Mediterranean, wrote to LABOUR MONTHLY about the unity which brought victory over fascism, and which 'holds great promise for the future. It has to be worked for and much has yet to be done to patch flaws here and there. L.M. has played no small part in this struggle, and will in the post-war years play a vital role'.

We could not stand still in that perfect moment of May Day, 1945. Though we did not know it at the time, we were on the threshold of the General Election. And nine weeks later came the Labour landslide. Here's how a Labour and Co-operative M.P. described it later writing in L.M.: 'In my election speeches,' wrote *Joseph Reeves,* 'I said that Socialism was no longer a dream, but a living reality. Its power and potency had been demonstrated by the Soviet Union, both in peace and in war, for all men to see who had the power of sight. Whilst Capitalism had led to fascism, nazism and Munich, Socialism had led to a measure of human achievement beyond the wildest dreams of Utopia.' He concluded: *'If we can achieve real Socialist measures during the next five years, there is no reason at all why we should ever have again a Tory majority in the Mother of Parliaments.'* How true that was; what was left undone in those years has had to be paid for. Now it cannot—it must not—be delayed. Today the shadow of the H-Bomb overhangs the world. The H-Bomb, German rearmament, a socialist policy as against a Tory, or a capitulation-to-Tory policy—these are the issues on which this election will be fought. Whether the Party Machine Bosses of whatever hue like it or not. That was clear from the Easter Conferences of the labour movement. Writing of the right-wing manoeuvres recently, *a Labour Councillor* and reader of long-standing, says: 'The unworthy thought comes to me: Do these people *want* to win an election? After all, they might find it hard not to give us a small dose of Socialism. Meanwhile, the effect of press, radio, TV, and the Church has got some people so scared that they see a Red under every bed—even when the bed isn't there.'

Of course, L.M. doesn't come to life for the four weeks of an election campaign and then retire to golden silence in Power or Opposition. If ever there

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Notes of the Month

Hydrogen Bomb Election

'All the old paraphernalia is out again. A part in this puppet show is played by the bogey of Bolshevism. Fortunately we do not find it hard to recognise this highly coloured figure. He is an old friend, a survival from the earliest days of the Nazi régime. . . . He was used to frighten Europe. . . . Now the Red Bogey is out again in the company of another figure.'

SIR ANTHONY EDEN, speech at the Albert Hall on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the Red Army, February 21, 1942.

THAT was thirteen years ago. Today Sir Anthony Eden as Prime Minister is preparing an election on a programme of hydrogen bomb war and Nazi rearmament in the name of the protection of 'Europe' against the same 'Red bogey'—but this time 'in the company of another figure' in command across the Atlantic. Let us add one more topical word of wisdom from Sir Anthony, all the more appropriate on this May Day which sees the tenth anniversary of the joint victory over Nazism:

That was the constant theme of German propaganda—the 'Bolshevist bogey', and how well Hitler used it.

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> Make no mistake: the moment fighting ceases Germany will be out on the old theme of propaganda again. She will again try to play us off against Russia, and Russia against America and ourselves. Let us be very careful that we do not fall victims to that.
>
> (Sir Anthony Eden, House of Commons, February 28, 1945)

Wise words, Sir Anthony. But the time to take note of the warning is now—when you have yourself fallen into the trap against which you warned others, and are seeking to drag this country into the same trap. Let us hope that Conservative Central Office does not forget to circulate these two essential guiding statements of their new Leader prominently in their election literature.

The Real Election Battle

Ten years have passed since that historic election of 1945 which swept out Toryism and expressed the desire and hope of the British people to enter on a new path. That desire and those hopes have been betrayed, and a very different path followed from that for which the people looked. These ten years have seen the repetition of Munich on a still worse scale, culminating in the disruption of the British-Soviet Alliance which was the safety of Britain. Toryism in power, drinking in new confidence from the defeatism and disruption of right-wing leadership in Labour's ranks, and encouraged by the results of the county elections, looks hopefully to the coming general election. The warning signal of the county elections has shown that for the labour movement, crippled by an official leadership and policy which fails to challenge Toryism on a single major issue or to present a coherent alternative programme, the battle to prevent a renewal of Tory rule for the next five years will be no easy one. Yet never was Toryism so vulnerable, alike in its servile betrayal of Britain to the Washington overlords and to Nazi militarism, its suicidal preparation of hydrogen bomb war, and in the grave worsening of the economic situation which has developed under its rule. But the most vulnerable opponent can only be wounded and dispatched if his adversary fights. Wider and wider sections of the Labour movement are coming to understand that the fight against Toryism cannot be conducted merely as a fight over labels, while the poison in the bottle remains the same. The fight needs to be conducted for an alternative programme which challenges Toryism, no less than its allies in the Labour movement, on the entire criminal and suicidal war policy and the disastrous consequences of that policy at home.

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A 'Political Vacuum'?

On what will the election be fought? If we were to examine the pronouncements so far made by the Government or the official 'Opposition' (whose Leader is duly salaried from the Tory-controlled public funds for his peculiar type of 'opposing', and even has the effrontery to boast of this salaried position, not as an exposure of his role, but as a demonstration—'Exhibit A'—of 'tolerance'), it would be difficult for the most painstaking elector to discover the difference on any of the vital issues that most affect the people. When Labour lost control of five County Councils to the Tories at the recent elections, the leader of the Labour group on the West Riding County Council, Alderman Hyman, gave frankly the reasons for the defeat:

> As long as its policy continued to differ so little from the Conservative policy, Labour must lose. The reason for the low poll was that the Labour voters who were not closely attached to the party machine had lost their enthusiasm. . . . Until Labour supporters were offered a policy they had to fight for the party would fail.

That is not the statement of a Communist critic. It is the verdict of a responsible Labour representative who has led the Labour majority, now lost, on one of the principal County Councils in a key industrial area of the country. Similarly the right-wing organ *Socialist Commentary,* while endorsing the acceptance of Tory foreign policy, complains of the 'uneasiness among Socialists at the lack of any clear domestic policy':

> In its home policy it (Labour) has allowed a dangerous vacuum to develop. If socialism is no longer the common ownership of the means of production, what is it? What are Socialists working for that Tories would not also accept?

If this is the political outlook of the right-wing leadership, then these are certainly not the politics of victory.

Heart of the Election

What, then, is the central question of this election? There can be no doubt of the answer if we are concerned with the real policies which most decisively affect the whole existence and future of the people. There can be no doubt that in the coming election, whatever the issues which the bi-partisan leaders of the ruling party machines choose to present for the deception of the electorate, in order to cover up their essential identity on all major policies, whatever the urgencies of the home situation and of the economic prospect, the cardinal question which dominates every other and

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determines the future for Britain is the decision to tie Britain to the American-Nazi war camp for a future atomic and hydrogen bomb war. All the other problems—all the crying needs of the home situation, of housing, education and the conditions of the people, all the aims of the labour movement and of socialism—are bound up with the necessity to defeat this central war policy. Unless this war policy is defeated, the future for Britain is dark.

Bamboozling the Electorate

It is the crowning irony of the peculiar democratic system operating in this country that this central question, this most fateful decision for the whole future of Britain, this most fateful decision in the entire history of Britain, has never been and never will be submitted to the verdict of the electorate so far as the overwhelming majority of constituencies are concerned. Just as the elector of 1945 had certainly no idea that he was voting for Britain to become an American atom bomber base, so the elector of 1955 in nineteen constituencies out of twenty will be offered no choice on the dread question of the hydrogen bomb. Whether he votes for the Hon. Adolphus Tomnoddy, staunch representative of the True Blue cause, or for Mr. Wisecrack Knowitall, the brilliant young economist whose undergraduate castigations of Marx delighted his Tory professor and who now bears aloft the banner of Labour, his vote will be counted as a vote for the hydrogen bomb. By the marvellous alchemy of the only truly democratic system in the world, the political wizards who control it are able to ensure that, before a single vote is cast, before even the date of the election is fixed, there will be an overwhelming majority for the hydrogen bomb. The result of the election, whichever of the two ruling parties wins, will assuredly be proclaimed to represent a 'mandate' for this policy of suicide. It is for this reason that the key practical problem before the people, and above all before all serious sections of the labour movement, in the coming election, is how best, within the crippling limits of these electoral conditions, and in spite of these limits, to carry forward the fight for the real interests and aspirations of the masses of the people, against the hydrogen bomb and the criminal war policy, and for peace and for the aims of socialism.

After Ten Years

It is appropriate that this hour of decision for Britain should coincide with the tenth anniversary of the joint victory over Nazism.

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Ten years ago the alliance of the Soviet Union, the United States and Britain destroyed the power of Nazism which had overrun Europe. Ten years ago the representatives of the three powers swore never again to allow the rearmament of Germany. Ten years ago the representatives of the three powers swore to maintain their co-operation during the coming decades in order to ensure the peace of the world. It is not the Soviet Union that has broken these pledges. It is not the Soviet Union that, at the very moment of making these solemn pledges, was plotting (as Churchill has since boasted at Woodford) to use Nazi troops against their ally, or was bombastically proclaiming the Anglo-American monopoly of the atom bomb to be the invincible weapon of Anglo-American world domination. It is not the Soviet Union that has made every international conference a farce by the system of invariably insisting on a preliminary Anglo-American conference to draw up rigid set terms in advance and arrive with these set terms like an ultimatum, thus sabotaging the possibility even of genuine negotiation, let alone, co-operation. It is not the Soviet Union that has restored the Nazis in command and placed atomic weapons in their hands.

Reversal of Alliances

Never in the whole foul record of imperialist faithlessness and treachery has there been so shameless and cynical a reversal of alliances as that executed by the United States and Britain during these ten years. It took seventeen years from the first world war before Sir John Simon arrived on his pilgrimage to Hitler in Berlin to tear up the Versailles Treaty and bless Hitler's Military Law for the remilitarisation of Germany. But even the old Munichites drew back from a direct military alliance with Hitler. They connived at Hitler's rearmament, and gave every material support; but they did not attempt to enforce it as the arch-pivot of their whole international policy and strategy. Now within ten years the Western allies have used all their powers of pressure and control to push through, against the wishes of the majority of the German people, the rearmament of German militarism in Western Germany, under the old generals of Nazism, and have drawn up a close military alliance with rearmed German militarism. They are working to push through similarly the rearmament of Japan. From being the enemies of the German and Japanese militarists, they have become their allies.

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The Dog Returns to his Vomit

From being the allies of the Soviet Union, they now openly direct all their strategy against it. From being at war with the Anti-Comintern Anti-Soviet Axis of Germany, Italy and Japan, they have now taken over the leadership of the renewed Atlantic Anti-Communist Anti-Soviet Axis, including Germany and Italy, and designed to include Japan in its Far Eastern counterpart, under cover of the same slogans as those used by Hitler, Goebbels and Tojo. Today the 'Soldiers' Calendar for 1955' circulates thoughout Western Germany, celebrating every triumph of Hitler's aggression for each appropriate day ('Occupation of Czechoslovakia, 1939', 'Kharkov reconquered, 1943'), adorned with a frontispiece of 'General Guderian, Creator of the German Panzer forces', and proclaiming the hope that the new soldiers 'will be filled with the same spirit as the soldiers in the last two world wars'. Truly, the record of the United States and Britain during these ten years has reached a depth of shame, compared with which Munich was an innocent flirtation with a tiger.

Yalta Boomerang

It was not without set purpose that the United States chose this moment of the tenth anniversary to publish their so-called 'documents' (actually, a random collection of American officials' notes and *ex parte* versions, omitting even the most important still unpublished American records, such as the Roosevelt private papers, the Byrnes, Harriman and Stettinius papers, etc.) of the Yalta Conference (correctly, Crimea Conference) of Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill in February, 1945. It might have been thought by the innocent that very shame would have led them to seek to hush up at all costs the memory of Yalta, when the three powers solemnly pledged their 'inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism' and 'disarm and disband all German armed forces' and their 'sacred obligation' to maintain 'co-operation and understanding among our three countries'. Churchill has recorded how already at Teheran he had proclaimed 'our duty to make the world safe for at least fifty years by German disarmament, by preventing German rearmament', and how, when Stalin reminded him that similar pledges by the Western powers after the first world war had been broken he replied: 'we were inexperienced then; it will be different this time'. Different this time? Yes: much quicker to break the pledges, before even one tenth of Churchill's fifty years were passed, and switch to the policy

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of German rearmament. But the innocent would seek in vain for any tinge of shame on brazen cheeks.

'Scrap of Paper' Diplomacy

The purpose of the United States Administration in publishing their so-called Yalta 'documents' at this moment was not to remind the American public of their pledged word and signed obligations. On the contrary. It was to proclaim publicly their repudiation of their pledged word and their contempt for signed obligations. It was to denounce the Yalta Agreements as 'treason' and the participants in those agreements as 'traitors'. It was to hand out 'titbits' of minor officials' gossip in order to create bad blood between Britain and the other countries of Europe. It was to set the stage for a new electoral swindle in the United States. Above all, it was designed to revile, execrate and anathematise the very idea of top-level great-power negotiations, agreements and co-operation, at just the moment when public opinion in all countries, including in the United States, as recent surveys have once again shown, is demanding such negotiation and co-operation. If it is legitimate to speak of 'treason' in the thieves' kitchen of imperialist diplomacy, it was not Roosevelt who was the 'traitor' (save in the eyes of the disciples of Goebbels, who used the same language about Yalta and Roosevelt ten years ago as American official expression uses today). The traitors to the pledged word and signed obligations of their states at Teheran, the Crimea and Potsdam were Eisenhower, Truman, Churchill and Attlee.

Partners in Guilt

If the major guilt for this destruction of the post-war hopes of mankind, for the flagrant repudiation of the wartime agreements and consequent bedevilling of international relations during these ten years, must lie with the original leader of counter-revolution now for thirty-eight years, Sir Winston Churchill, who took the initiative at Fulton and opened the gates for the American expansionists to take over the running, that guilt is shared by the Attlee-Bevin-Morrison triumvirate in the post-war Labour Government and their role of willing partners of Churchill in the fulfilment of the Fulton programme. It used to be said of Bevin as a joke that he treated the U.S.S.R. as a communist breakaway from his transport union; but Trygve Lie has since recorded in his memoirs that (nature once again surpassing art) this was in literal fact Bevin's viewpoint

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described in his own words. Writing of a conversation with Bevin in London in May, 1950, he records:

> Mr. Bevin said that so long as he remained Foreign Secretary he would not take part in any new discussions or negotiations with the Russians until their actions proved that they had changed their minds and hearts. . . . As a Labour organisation man, he added, he had participated in the expulsion of the Communists because they would never pay any attention to the rules, and as Foreign Secretary his opinion of the Russians and of their behaviour since the second world war was the same.
>
> (Trygve Lie, *In Defence of Peace*, 1954, p. 310.)

The American Illusion

Indeed, the disastrous pro-American anti-Soviet illusion extended during those most critical years of the decade since the war also to sections of the labour movement which desired to regard themselves as on the left. This has been brought out with singularly full documentation in the recent American survey *Britain: Uneasy Ally* by Professor Epstein. Reviewing this, R. H. S. Crossman confesses (*New Statesman and Nation*, April 9):

> Until I read Mr. Epstein I had quite forgotten how enthusiastically pro-American the *New Statesman*, the *Tribune*, Miss Jennie Lee, Mr. Foot and I myself all were in those far-off days. Now, reading *Britain: Uneasy Ally*, I can recall how our socialist ideology swept us all into an uncritical enthusiasm for what we believed to be a sincere American attempt to win the cold war not by armed strength but by social and economic measures. . . . The Labour Left, envisaging an alliance between Truman's Fair Deal and Attlee's Socialism, fell for it, and I at least am willing to accept Mr. Epstein's accusation that it was my Socialist blinkers which made me do so.

Very curious 'socialist blinkers' which led to 'uncritical enthusiasm' for the citadel of capitalism.

Communist Party Vindicated

But the belated confession has its significance for the problems of today. For today the correctness of the analysis, which the Communist Party was initially alone in making from the outset, revealing the strategy of American intervention in Europe, first through the stages of economic intervention and the Marshall Plan, and then advancing successively to military occupation, Nazi rearmament and the preparation of atomic war from European bases, is now universally recognised on the left, and indeed among all serious political observers. The task of responsible political leadership, however, is to appraise the significance of events carefully and justly

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at the time, and not to arrive always at the tail of events after the results have become obvious to the most unthinking. The same political clarity—which only a serious class analysis, that is, a Marxist-Leninist approach can make possible—is now more than ever needed among all sections of the left, and throughout the labour movement, in the new critical problems of the present international situation and home political situation.

From Churchill to Eden

The transition from Churchill to Eden is more than a change in the visible figurehead of the Conservative Party. It is more than that, not because of any evidence of independent strength of character or distinctive political strategy on the part of Sir Anthony Eden, but rather for the opposite reason. It represents a certain shift in the balance of power within Conservatism, and a reassertion of the main traditional Conservative forces, which during the critical post-war years found themselves compelled to accept the leadership of Churchill as an indispensable political asset for mass prestige, but by no means felt confidence in his sometimes adventurous and incalculable policies. Thus the independent Conservative organ, the *Spectator*, commented on April 8:

> The Conservative Party exists again. . . . For fifteen years the normal working of Conservative politics has been prevented by the fact that Sir Winston Churchill has been the leader of the party. Not only has he never been *of* the party . . . but his immense authority and prestige have enabled him—either wittingly or unwittingly—to stifle movements of Conservative opinion which might otherwise have had a determining influence on policy. . . . The Conservative Central Office will again come into its own.

With Sir Anthony Eden they feel safe. The transition may be compared in certain respects to the corresponding transition after the first world war from Lloyd George to Bonar Law and Baldwin. It is a measure of the bankruptcy of the existing dominant Labour Party leadership that official undisguised Conservatism should thus feel renewed confidence to reassert itself for the support of the majority of the electorate without protective colouration.

A Parting Kick

There is some indication that the retirement of Sir Winston Churchill reflected the pressure of his Conservative colleagues rather than his own choice of date. On the very eve of his retirement Sir

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Winston Churchill delivered a blow against Sir Anthony Eden by repudiating the latter on the central question of the international political situation, the question of Four Power talks. Eden, speaking as Foreign Secretary, had obsequiously repeated the Eisenhower-Dulles line, that any approach to such negotiations must only be considered through a carefully graded series of stages, first, through 'explorations' by officials, then to a possible meeting of Foreign Ministers, and only then, in the event of success of the preceding stages, to a possible top-level meeting. It is obvious that this method of approach is a transparent method of sabotaging the whole purpose of genuine Four Power negotiations, since the officials at the first stage would be completely tied by their briefs and unable to negotiate independently, so that the first stage could be guaranteed to produce deadlock.

Betrayal of Britain

Immediately after this official statement of policy of docile subservience to the United States by the Foreign Secretary, Sir Winston Churchill, still speaking as Prime Minister, took it on himself to re-assert his views that negotiations should begin 'at the summit':

> I have never departed in any way from my view that a top level meeting, without agenda, might be a helpful manner of approaching a solution to these world problems. It might be helpful to have the wish and the will expressed from the summit, and the agreement of heads of Governments recorded in broad and simple terms if any can be reached. These can then be studied and implemented at the official level.

This statement on the eve of retirement need not necessarily be taken as indicating, in view of the preceding record over two years, that Churchill was conducting any serious minority fight for genuine top-level negotiations. On the contrary, the publication of his correspondence with Molotov has sufficiently exposed his own repudiation in practice of his electoral pledges and professions, and his surrender at each decisive point to the pressure of the United States, backed by Diehard Toryism. Thus Churchill has finally departed, not in triumph, but in the depths of ignominy of complete failure or refusal to carry out his professed intentions over two years. But the indication of a rift in tactical method would certainly suggest that the transition to Eden signifies at the present stage a further hardening in the course of the most negative Conservatism, practical subservience to the United States, and trampling underfoot of Britain's vital interests.

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Tweedle-Dum-Dulles and Tweedle-Dee-Eden

Despite his positive role at the Geneva Conference last year—where the success achieved was primarily due to the absence of the United States, the peacemaking initiatives of Chou En-lai and Molotov, the strength of Vietnam and the political situation in France—Sir Anthony Eden has in general shown himself, on his past record, the most sedulous servitor and mouthpiece of American interests and policy in Britain. He signed the Geneva Agreement; but immediately afterwards he signed the aggressive Manila Pact, designed by the United States to wreck the Geneva Agreement. At Bangkok he conducted a certain resistance in detail on behalf of British imperialist strategy in South-East Asia as against the American strategic aims (rejection of unified command; opposition to the link-up with Chiang and Rhee); but in practice he held Britain tied to the American Manila Pact, thus causing an open break between Britain and India. On the Far Eastern crisis he has accompanied the blustering threats of Dulles by honeyed words to China; but the content in each case was the same, to demand Chinese acquiescence in the American armed aggression on Formosa (though Eden did not go so far as the Labour Party Executive in proposing that a British naval force be sent to assist in maintaining that aggression). The identity beneath the display of difference was emphasised by the American publicist, Stewart Alsop, in the *New York Herald Tribune* of March 17:

> The almost simultaneous speeches by Secretary Dulles and Foreign Minister Eden revealed two sides of the same coin. Neither was in the least surprised by what the other had to say. Indeed, the whole thing was something of a Tweedle-Dum and Tweedle-Dee act, with Tweedle-Dee-Eden offering the carrot to the Chinese donkey while Tweedle-Dum-Dulles brandished the stick.

The British electors will have to decide whether they wish to be represented by Tweedle-Dee-Eden to partner Tweedle-Dum-Dulles.

New Moves for Peace

For meanwhile significant new moves are developing for peace, alike in Europe and in Asia—with Britain left out of the picture. In Europe the Soviet-Austrian Agreement, following on the visit of Chancellor Raab to Moscow, for an Austrian peace treaty, with the ending of military occupation, guaranteeing the real independence of Austria and blocking all attempts to draw Austria in the wake of West German militarism or into the net of military coalitions, not only represents a triumph for peace, but opens up a new outlook

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for Central Europe and for the whole future of Europe. It is not surprising that influential political sections in Western Germany have looked with longing eyes at this demonstration of the successful outcome of direct negotiations with the Soviet Union, and seen in it the possibility of a parallel path to a peaceful united Germany in place of a partitioned Western Germany tied to the American military coalition. France has demonstratively proclaimed a refusal to manufacture atomic or hydrogen bombs; and all French expression openly hopes, despite the enforced ratification of the Paris Agreements, for a Four Power Conference to cancel German rearmament. ('The French evidently hope that, despite ratification, German rearmament may never materialise,' *Wall Street Journal*, March 28.) Above all, in Bandung takes place the Afro-Asian Conference of 29 nations of Asia and Africa, representing 1,440 million people or the majority of the human race, in the cause of the five principles of the Chou-Nehru Agreement for peaceful co-existence, non-aggression and national sovereignty. This Conference is the most powerful demonstration of the new balance of forces in the world.

Britain and Peace

In this new world situation, with the many hopeful signs, alongside the obvious dangers, with the visible gathering of the forces for peace on all sides, where stands Britain under Eden? On the wrong side of the fence on every issue—chained to the American war camp and isolated from the developing moves for peace. In Asia Britain adheres to the aggressive American Manila Pact, which is openly denounced by Nehru as a menace to Asia. Thereby Britain under Eden publicly clashes with India. In the Far East Britain under Eden upholds the American aggression on Formosa. In the Middle East Britain under Eden joins the Iraq-Turkey Pact which is linked to the American chain of aggressive military alliances throughout the region, and is thereby brought into opposition to Egypt. In Europe, while majority opinion in France and in Germany seeks an alternative path for peaceful German unification in place of rearming German militarism, Britain under Eden sticks to enforcing the letter of the American-imposed Paris Agreements for rearming German militarism, partitioning Germany and Europe, and thereby preparing the way for an aggressive N.A.T.O. atomic war. Through this policy Britain under Eden renders void the British-Soviet Treaty for Peace and Co-operation, and thereby loses the protection of that

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treaty against the renewal of German military aggression. While France disclaims the hydrogen bomb, Britain under Eden manufactures the hydrogen bomb and proclaims the aim of nuclear war. On every side the Tory Eden-Butler policy isolates Britain, left in the grip of American dictation, surrenders the most vital interests of Britain, and blocks the road to peace. Whatever the hypocritical phrases about abstract aims of peace and future negotiations (while leaving the war policy intact) which may be expected from Eden and his colleagues for electoral purposes, this real war policy and subservience to the American war camp needs to be relentlessly exposed in the election. The central fight for peace in this election needs to be conducted against the American-Tory war camp, and against the adherence of official Labour policy to that war camp.

Economic Warnings

The Tory Eden-Butler policy is already bringing disastrous economic consequences to Britain. All the sunshine talk during the first phase of the Tory Government about conquering the crisis and ending the deficit and ensuring prosperity has now to be thrown into the discard. Just as the Labour Government sought to take advantage of the favourable turn in the terms of trade during 1949 and 1950 to boast that 'Socialism' had conquered the crisis and banished the deficit, until the deficit returned worse than ever in 1951, so the Tory Government sought to take advantage of the favourable turn in the terms of trade during 1952 and 1953 to boast that Toryism had conquered the crisis and banished the deficit, until now the deficit has once again returned by the second half of 1954. During the second half of 1954 the deficit in the balance of payments (omitting American 'aid') was running at an annual rate of £76 million, and is estimated to be now approaching 'double that rate, at least' (*Economist,* April 16). No wonder Mr. Butler was so anxious to hasten the election before the creeping shadow over Lancashire might extend to the motor car and other industries, and before the new economic offensive which Toryism and the employers desire is let loose against the workers and those with low incomes.

Whose Responsibility for Economic Worsening?

Is the worsening economic situation due to 'external factors' independent of Tory policy, as the Tory Government would now like to plead, just as the Labour Government sought to plead before them? They were quick to ignore the 'external factors', so long as

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the balance was taking a favourable turn, and to claim the credit for their policy. Now that the boot is on the other foot, they cannot so easily escape. For, in fact, the economic situation is bound up with policy. The publicly admitted Government overseas expenditure during the second half of 1954 was running at £190 million a year, or more than twice the deficit. In practice the real cost of the overseas colonial wars and military commitments would be considerably heavier (and will be further increased by £80-90 million German occupation costs under the Paris agreements). The diversion of economic resources to the arms programme decisively affects the entire economic situation.

Bans on Trade

While the Tory Government has zealously observed the American-imposed bans on the development of Britain's trade with the expanding markets of the countries with the most rapidly advancing economies in the world, West Germany and other European countries have been quick to take advantage of the opportunity. The Soviet offer to Britain of £400 million orders over three years was never taken up. Instead, the total of Britain's exports to the Soviet Union during the three years 1952-54 has amounted to no more than £16 million, or a figure equivalent to throwing away £384 million value of trade by Tory policy. After Soviet orders for fish-factory ships from Britain had been refused an export license, the fish-factory ships are now being launched at Kiel for export from West Germany to the Soviet Union. The fight to free Britain from the stranglehold of the Tory-American war policy is the indispensable first condition for any serious attempt to improve the economic situation in Britain.

Phoney 'Prosperity'

The truth about the conditions of life of the people of this country, in contrast to all the Tory propaganda of 'prosperity', is amply and effectively exposed in the article of William Lauchlan in the current number. All the talk of higher living standards, increased food consumption and improved well-being cannot conceal the hard facts (revealed in the National Food Survey and Economic Survey, analysed in the *Economist*, April 2) that, compared with the average of 1934-38, consumption per head of meat has decreased from 33.8 ounces per week to 31.7 in 1954; of fish, from 6.7 to 5.1; of butter, from 7.6 to 4.3; of fruit, from 38.2 to 36.5; and of vegetables, from

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37.0 to 36.2. On the other hand, the consumption of potatoes has gone up from 56 ounces to 67.9, and of margarine from 2.7 to 5.7. Thus, compared with the hungry 'thirties, the nation is eating less meat, fish, butter, fruit and vegetables (the only favourable increase is in the consumption of milk), and moving over to a diet of increased consumption of potatoes and margarine. Such are the 'improved' standards of living below the level of the hungry 'thirties. All the talk of the marvellous advance in the social services and the 'welfare state' cannot conceal the facts, revealed at the Easter Conference of the National Union of Teachers, that the proportion of the national income spent on education has fallen from 9 per cent. forty years ago to 7 per cent. today, and that the expenditure per head on every school child, taking into account the rise in prices, is below the level of 1938. 'Progress' backwards. The battle for the needs of the people and for the social services, so far from being won, is in many respects more urgent now than it has ever been.

The Fight for an Alternative Programme

The fight of the people in this election needs to be a fight for an alternative programme to the disastrous programme of Toryism or its allies in the high places of the Labour Party. Whatever the difficulties imposed by the peculiar conditions of the electoral and political system, devised in its present functioning to impose a single reactionary programme through the mechanism of a two-party monopoly, the fight needs to be carried forward everywhere, in every constituency, for the aims of peace, the reduction of armaments and the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapons; for the liberation of Britain from the American-Nazi war camp; for friendship and co-operation with the colonial peoples in their battle for freedom, and with all peoples in the cause of peace; for the urgent needs of the people, to divert the economic resources of the present increased production from expenditure for destruction in order to raise the living standards and extend the social services; and to enter on the real battle against monopoly for the objectives of socialist nationalisation of the basic industries.

Into the Election Fight

These aims, which are voiced by the Communist Party in this election, undoubtedly correspond to the true outlook, the interests and the desires of the overwhelming majority of the labour movement, as the Easter Conferences have abundantly shown. The

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Easter Conferences of the trade unions and of the Co-operative Party have also shown the strength of militancy that is ready to be mobilised, and that could without question overwhelmingly rout Toryism, if it were mobilised for such a programme. While in the existing electoral conditions such a programme can only be directly and fully voiced without trammels or restriction by the candidates of the Communist Party in the constituencies where Communists are standing, the fight for these aims needs to be carried forward, and can be carried forward, in every constituency, to press these demands upon the Labour candidates, and thus to combine the fight against Toryism with the fight for an effective alternative programme. Only in this way can the indispensable political fight be carried forward in this election, not only for the defeat of Toryism, but for the advance of a positive alternative policy which corresponds to the urgent needs of Britain and to the aims of peace and socialism.

April 16, 1955. R.P.D.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

AGENTS OF CAPITALISM

Why is it that these leaders act in this manner? It is precisely because they are not revolutionaries. They have no faith in the working class, they have no desire to end the capitalist system and they know that when the working class offer resistance to speeding up, against longer hours and puts forward demands for better standards of living, this action constitutes a blow at the very existence of capitalism; the trade union agents of capitalism in their frantic endeavours to defend it are forced to trick and smash down every indication of the rising wave of struggle. Therefore, every engineering worker should resolve to make an end of all the humbug, all the conscious deception of the negotiating method and the politics which it represents, and to turn his attention to the struggle in the factories as the only means of obtaining better conditions.

From *The Fight of the Engineering Workers*, by J. R. Scott, May, 1930.

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THE ELECTION BATTLE

I. The Tories' Home Record

WILLIAM LAUCHLAN

THROUGHOUT Britain the Tory posters have been screaming for months that 'Tory Freedom Works'. And how it works! The Tory Government, wholly unrepresentative, elected by a minority vote, is not only threatening war, but is robbing and ruining the people in the process. Everything the Tories have done since they have been in office has helped to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. Last year, for example, was a phenomenally successful year for the capitalists. Wages and prices rose by about 4 per cent.; profits rose by 10 per cent.; dividends went up 20 per cent.; share values rose by just under 40 per cent.

What about the workers? The average British worker is now working a longer working week than before the war. Since 1946 the average of hours worked has risen until it is today 48.5—two hours more than in April, 1948. The employers have succeeded in making the shorter working week a dead letter. The whole process results in all the gains of the shorter working week being abolished, without any compensating benefits to the workers. It is true that the employers are making overtime payments for the extra hours worked, but the intensity of exploitation of the workers has been enormously increased.

The exploitation of the workers is being furthered also under cover of productivity campaigns and 'work study' schemes. Here is an example of what has been developing throughout many industries during these last few years. According to one of the Productivity Reports the firm of Glenfield and Kennedy, Ltd., Kilmarnock, applied work study to the manufacture of small sluice valves.

> During the first year . . . production was increased by 40 per cent. and productivity by some 60 per cent. At the same time scrap, lost time and labour costs were reduced by 27 per cent. In the first six months after its application to heavy sluice valves production was increased by some 30 per cent. and productivity by some 40 per cent., whereas labour costs were reduced by 43 per cent.

It was claimed that 'some employees have thereby raised their weekly earnings by amounts ranging up to £3 per week'. It looks good to have earnings going up by £3 a week—even if only for 'some employees'. But there's another side to the medal. In 1949 this firm paid 20 per cent. dividend to ordinary shareholders. In

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1950 this was increased to 25 per cent. In May, 1951, they capitalised reserves and gave the shareholders 100 per cent. bonus shares absorbing £700,000 fully paid capital ranking for dividend in 1951. In that year they paid 15 per cent. on doubled capital and gave a centenary bonus of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. which was equal to 35 per cent. on the original capital.

All the attempts of the Tories to prove that things aren't so bad for the workers because wages and prices rose at approximately the same rate last year can't conceal the fact that in the last three years sugar prices have increased by 50 per cent.; butter and margarine by $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent.; meat, flour, bacon by 20 per cent. The retail prices of various foods, including jam and marmalade, tea, coffee, flour, bacon, rice, tinned peas and meat have all increased since the beginning of this year.

The victories of the engineers, shipbuilders, miners, electricians, and railwaymen in the battle for higher wages shows the way forward for the working class in its desire for better conditions of life. These recent awards, gained after the magnificent demonstration of working-class power by the railwaymen, have demonstrated the vulnerable position of the employers and the Tory Government. Given the fullest, united mobilisation of the workers' forces they can not only secure increased wages, but arouse the whole of the working people for the battle to defeat the Tories in the General Election.

Vicious and brutal though the employers have been in their drive for profit during these years of Tory rule, they have been equally concerned to attack, undermine, and to destroy the social services. The whole aim of Tory capitalist policy has been to destroy the idea of the universal application of the social services. This is revealed throughout the whole field of social conditions.

The shabbiest treatment and the dirtiest of tricks have been reserved for the old folks who, after a life-time of service to the nation were looking for some ease and comfort in their declining years. The Tories make great play about the increase of 7s. 6d. and 11s. for a single person and a married couple respectively and which comes into operation in the last week of April. What are the facts? Since 1946 when the original benefits were fixed at 26s. and 42s. respectively the cost of living has risen steadily. Successive increases in the pension rate have always lagged behind the rising prices. The Tories claim that by bringing the standard rates of benefit and pensions to 40s. for a single person and 65s. for a couple that they

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have not only restored the purchasing power to the level of 1946, but have actually provided some margin over this. This is patent nonsense. The claim is based on the old, discredited Cost of Living Index according to which the cost of living has risen 43 per cent. The London and Cambridge Economic Service Index, however, shows an increase of 54 per cent. between 1946 and September, 1954. Indeed, taking 'subsistence' items alone—which are the sole items for the great majority of pensioners—*i.e.*, food, clothing, fuel and light, rent and rates, it shows that these items have increased by 66 per cent. So bad is the situation, so desperate the plight of the old folks that a Glasgow doctor recently declared that he administered drugs to hundreds of old age pensioners 'because it was the only way they could keep alive'.

The Tories claim to have broken all kinds of records in house-building these last few years. Considering that the size of the houses has been steadily and systematically reduced, that one set of economies has followed another in house-building so that cupboard space, hall space, fireplaces, ceiling heights, have all been drastically reduced, it is not surprising that there has been an increase in the number of houses put up. But the effort to increase the number of houses for sale and not for letting has been relentless. The systematic piling up of financial burdens on to the Local Authorities has made many raise rents and, throughout the country, many families, after waiting wearily for release from old or overcrowded conditions find that they cannot bear the financial burden and their long-awaited house goes by the board. Housing accommodation according to ability to pay a high rent, and not according to need has been the Tory maxim. And they have certainly kept it firmly in mind. The Tory Rent and Repairs Act opened the way for an attack to be made on eight million families by the landlords, who have been encouraged by the vision of £80 million more in rent each year, with the prospect of raising the capital value of their property by £1,000 million.

The latest decision to raise the rate of interest on Loans borrowed by the Local Authorities will mean still higher rents and rates, and more for the money-lenders. For every £1,000 borrowed the Local Authority will have to pay back £2,646. This will mean a further rent increase of 2s. to 2s. 6d. a week. Before the Tories took office the rate of interest was 3 per cent. At that rate the bankers received £2,100 interest on each house over sixty years. Today, with the new rate, it means that on each house the bankers will receive £2,800.

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In Education the Tory policy has been one of deliberate attrition of the whole service. It is perfectly plain that the level of expenditure per child today is actually less than the expenditure pre-war. Before the war the expenditure per child for primary education was £16 and, for secondary education £36. Today the respective figures are £32 and £59. When it is remembered that the official value of the £1 is 8s. 6d. compared with pre-war it will be seen that the figures should be £35 and £80 to be on a par with the poor state of affairs before the war. Since the school population has risen by nearly 1½ million it is clear that the older children have been carrying the younger ones, costs have been kept down to their detriment in order to pay for the 'bulge' in school population. 'Mass production' for the children of the masses in the field of education has been the Tory motto viciously fought for by successive Ministers of Education.

In Health, as in Education, the undermining campaign has been pressed forward. The consequences of the intensified exploitation of the workers are not only greater profits for the capitalists. They are also fatigue, worry and strain felt as never before and by larger numbers of working people. The Report of H.M. Factory Inspector for 1953 revealed that there were 744 deaths and 181,637 accidents in premises covered by the Factories Acts. The Report of H.M. Mines Inspector for 1952 showed that there were 420 deaths and 238,000 accidents causing disablement for more than three days in the coal mines. In both Reports the number of accidents shows an increase over the previous year. The class basis of disease continues in Tory Britain. You are eight times as likely to get bronchitis if you are an unskilled worker than if you belong to the wealthy section of the community. You are twice as likely to die of T.B. or lung diseases if you are an unskilled worker than if you are a professional worker. The trend to make the people pay for the Health Service has been pushed forward by the Tory Government. Their charge on prescriptions hit hardest the poorest and those suffering persistent ill health.

At the same time they spend 134 times more money on atomic and hydrogen weapon research than they devote to the cause and cure of cancer. They spend four times as much on arms to kill as they do to save life. Because of their neglect of the Health Service, their refusal to pay decent salaries and improve conditions, 25,000 beds are lying empty in Britain today owing to the shortage of staff.

It is time to call a halt to this Tory offensive against the working

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people of Britain. It is not enough to expose the fraud and falsity of Tory 'freedom' and 'prosperity'. It is necessary to fight for, and to secure, the adoption in the Labour movement of an alternative policy of higher wages and a shorter working week; increased pensions, improved and extended social services, based on a policy of peace that means the banning of the hydrogen bomb; ending the rearming of the ex-Nazis, and drastically reducing the spending of vast sums on armaments.

II. The Labour Party and the Election

JOHN GOLLAN

THE General Election makes all the more urgent the key questions of policy which found expression in the battle of the left and the right in the Labour Party on the eve of the election, and which reached dramatic sharpness with the withdrawal of the Parliamentary Whip from Aneurin Bevan and the attempt to expel him from the Labour Party. It was a crime that the right wing leadership launched such an attack on the eve of a General Election. The fighting spirit shown in the Labour movement on this crisis is the spirit that can and must defeat the Tories in this election. It is nonsense to say that the left fight helped the Tories. On the contrary, the left fight is the salvation of the Labour movement and the force the Tories fear.

The right wing attempt to expel Bevan from the Labour Party was the most serious attack on the left in the Labour Party for twenty years. It has been warded off—the right wing leadership has suffered a setback. But the resolution ultimately passed by the Labour Party National Executive is full of menace, threatening further action in the future. The crisis in the Labour Party is unresolved. The right wing were defeated in their effort to expel the left. But equally the grip of the right on the Labour Party remains. A new stage in the struggle opens up.

This struggle of the left versus the right in the Labour Party is as old as the Labour Party itself. It will exist until the left is victorious by rallying its united strength to defeat the right. This defeat of the latest attack of the right contains important lessons which properly assessed and assimilated could facilitate this victory. Exclusion of the Communist Party from the Labour Party, which was founded as a broad coalition of all working class forces, was the first effort of the right, in the 'twenties, to split the movement.

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The result in the inter-war years was the MacDonald betrayal of 1931, which merely replaced the MacDonald-Snowden-Thomas leading right wing group by the Attlee-Morrison-Bevin group. The attack on the Communists was broadened out to include the left with Bevan and Cripps in the 'thirties. But the latest expression of the conflict and crisis in the Labour Party is more than the mere continuation of the events of the inter-war years. It represents a deep development of that conflict of the utmost significance for the future of the British working-class movement. It is above all the reflection in the Labour movement of the crisis in British policy now confronting the country as a whole, cutting across all established political, social and religious divisions.

The desperate decision to manufacture the hydrogen bomb and prepare Britain for the annihilation of hydrogen warfare is the decision of men who will stick at nothing to defend their dying social system. It is the logical and criminal conclusion of the Churchill anti-Soviet, N.A.T.O.-cum-German rearmament policy—a denial of all Britain's true interests. This decision poses before the British people with even greater urgency than before the need for a reversal of policy, for Great Power talks and genuine negotiations and agreement. As was inevitable, this great 'moral crisis' (to use the words of *The Times*), found its sharpest expression in the Labour Party. It is no accident that the decision to discipline Bevan and attack the left arose out of the opposition of the 61 M.P.'s to the right wing 'censure' motion on Government policy which was in fact an endorsement of Churchill's policy of manufacturing the H-bomb.

Precisely because of all this the revolt in the Labour Party for a change of policy has reached its highest point for years and is bound to develop. And what has profoundly shaken the right wing is the way in which the trade unions with progressive policies have joined forces with the majority of the Constituency Labour Parties—a new factor which threatens their hitherto unchallenged grip on the Party machine. This was seen at Scarborough last year where the right only avoided utter defeat on the issue of German rearmament—the central issue of Labour policy—by a shameful swindle. It is a combination of all these factors which makes the present position in the Labour Party and its outcome infinitely more significant than the Bevan-Cripps crisis of the 'thirties.

It might be asked, Why did the right wing choose this moment to strike at Bevan and the left?—for it must be understood that if the expulsion of Bevan had succeeded every vestige of left expression

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in the Labour Party would have been outlawed. The right wing leaders struck because they are becoming more desperate. They are afraid of the developing situation in the movement. They know that they really represent a minority in the Labour movement just as the Tories have no mandate for their present criminal policies and represent a tiny minority of opinion in the country as a whole. They can't wait for the outcome of a democratic battle for policy in the movement. Scarborough was the warning, and since then the A.S.W. delegates and Clerks' delegates to the Scarborough Conference supporting German rearmament have been repudiated. They therefore precipitate the issue while still in charge of the machine and attempt to split the movement. The seriousness of the war danger and the need to dragoon the movement, the growth of the wages struggle, and the imminence of an economic crisis which would place their whole policy of class collaboration in jeopardy, urges them on.

The signal of further resistance to their policy was shown in the great movement against German rearmament which culminated in the National Lobby to Parliament on January 25. Since then M.P.'s have been subjected to unprecedented mass pressure which caused a virtual revolt in the Parliamentary Labour Party. The rising movement against the H-bomb presaged an even greater movement than that on German rearmament, therefore the right wing decided to act. In the event they have stumbled. The mass movement has proved, at least for the time being, stronger than the machine. The facts are well known. The voting on the withdrawal of the Whip from Bevan was a serious blow to the hopes of the right, an indication of the strength of the left and the popular pressure on the M.P.'s. At that meeting on Wednesday, March 16, Fred Lee's amendment for censure was only defeated by 138 votes to 124, a majority of 14—and that even after Attlee indicated that the Shadow Cabinet would consider the matter an issue of confidence. The withdrawal of the Whip was only carried by 141 votes to 112, a majority of 29. Despite this moral defeat, the extreme right wing went forward to press for explusion in the National Executive. Having gone so far they could not withdraw, for to withdraw was to concede defeat. At the same time the entire movement, conscious of what was at stake, rallied to the struggle. As the statement of the Communist Party put it:

> The rank and file can defeat these measures. The Local Labour Parties, trade union and co-operative organisations, the workers in the factories,

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ALBERT EINSTEIN

MARCH 14, 1879—APRIL 18, 1955

ALBERT EINSTEIN, generally recognised as the greatest man of science of this century, ranking in mathematics and the physical sciences with Archimedes, Galileo and Newton, died an exile from his native land. By his work he transformed basic conceptions of the universe. His special and general theories of relativity (1905 and 1915), greeted at first with derision, emerged triumphantly from the astronomical tests proposed by him (gravitational bending of stellar light, the perihelion of Mercury and the spectral shift to the red). They superseded the older Newtonian framework of physical science (of absolute space and absolute time) and made possible the mathematical investigation of sub-atomic particles and the development of wave-mechanics. To Einstein we owe the conception of the equivalence of mass and energy, which in fact found its practical application in the atom and hydrogen bombs but which could be used for the liberation of mankind from material needs.

The conclusions drawn from his theoretical work by a horde of idealist philosophers that the laws of causation no longer held good were not shared by Einstein, who thus towered above many of his disciples as well as the philosophers who without understanding science wish to use it in support of obscurantism and reaction. Persecuted, because of his Jewish origin, in Germany where the Hitlerite fascists burned his books, he fled to Britain where he had to be guarded against fascists; and later became a citizen of the United States. There he raised his voice against McCarthyism and urged younger men of science to refuse, as he had refused, to testify before the witch-hunt committees and tribunals. His opinion of the position to which scientists were being reduced in the United States was expressed in his sardonic remark, shortly before his death, that if he could be born again, he 'would rather be a plumber'. He felt deeply the whole problem of our times though he did not see his way clearly to the solution. One of the greatest minds in the whole history of mankind, he was also a humanist, an anti-fascist and a strong supporter of peace.

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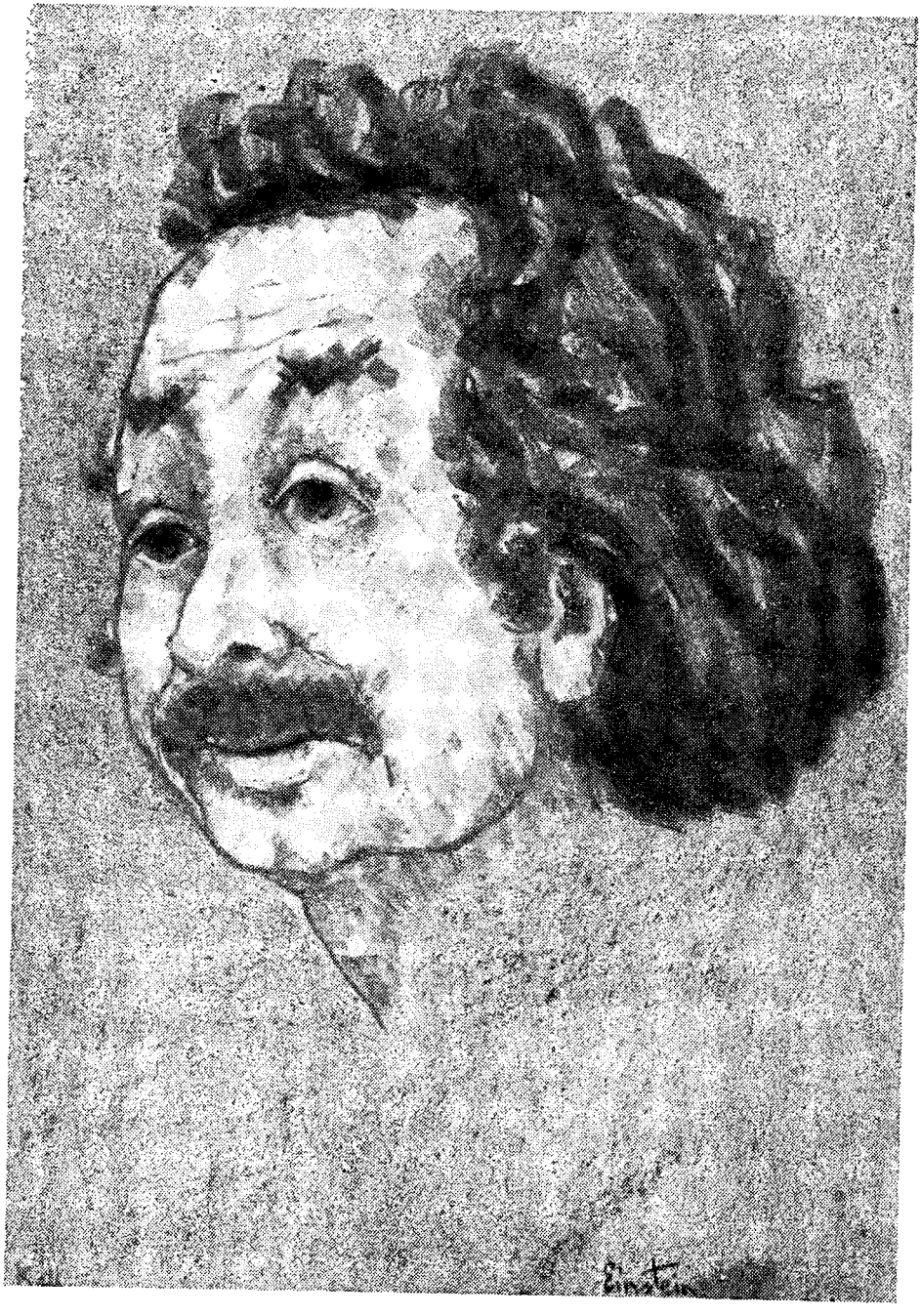

HEAD OF EINSTEIN, *by Edmond X. Kapp*

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mines, mills, depots and streets, can smash the right-wing attempts at disruption. . . . Everything depends on the speed and power with which the working people make their voices heard.

A wave of protest resolutions and telegrams from Constituency Parties, trade union organisations, shop stewards' committees, and the like flooded into Transport House on an unprecedented scale. On the eve of the Executive meeting and immediately afterwards these protests were supported by the powerful voices of the Executives of the N.U.R., the A.E.U., the Foundry workers, the Agricultural workers, and the Scots and Welsh miners. The Yorkshire miners Executive decision to refuse to endorse the withdrawal of the Whip was the writing on the wall for Attlee and Griffiths, who finally moved the composite resolution at the Executive of a Sub-Committee to get assurances from Bevan regarding his future conduct. But in spite of all this, Gaitskell and Morrison and the extreme right wing trade union leaders persisted in their effort to secure expulsion. The compromise resolution was only carried in the Executive on March 23 by 14 votes to 13. This partial split in the right wing forces only serves to show the pathological fanaticism of the extreme right in their dealings with the left. Even Attlee is not tough enough for them—they want not only to expel the left and split the Labour movement, they want to replace Attlee as the leader of the Labour Party by Gaitskell.

The proceedings of the National Executive meeting of March 30 have been muted by the newspaper strike. But they are nevertheless significant. Expulsion was tried again and was again defeated. The resolution carried by 16 votes to 7 with Attlee, Griffiths and one other abstaining, endorses withdrawal of the Whip and notes Bevan's 'assurances'. But what these assurances amount to are a declaration to serve under Mr. Attlee's leadership and to quote his words 'In doing so I claim no more privileges than, and accept all the obligations shared by other members of the Party'. At the same time the resolution ominously warns that the Executive 'will take drastic action against future violation of Party discipline'. And this is the intention of the right wing.

The fact that a General Election is pending means nothing to them for the left, not the Tories, is their enemy. As the crisis over Bevan's expulsion developed the Tories were in the process of getting rid of Churchill and replacing him by Eden to prepare for the election. The Churchill resignation took place as the County Council election results rolled in. It was used by Tories for election propaganda to the full, and the right wing Labour leaders joined in

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the game. Labour lost control of five counties—West Riding, Essex, Staffordshire, Carmarthenshire and Lancashire—and lost seats everywhere. This ominous foretaste to the General Election is the gravest warning yet of the results of right wing policy.

The lessons of the failure of the right wing attack on the left around Bevan are clear enough. They show both the strength and the weakness of the left. To face the further attacks, the weaknesses should be tackled now and this is doubly necessary in view of the General Election. The policy needed to overcome the crisis in the Labour movement is the same policy needed to defeat the Tories in the General Election. And here the left forces must abandon any attitude of looking to a Labour defeat in the Election as a means to attack the right. The issues are too serious for that. It was the power of the mass movement that defeated Gaitskell, Morrison and the extreme right wing. That movement can both defeat the Tories and change Labour's policy. What is now needed?

First, agreement on a united left policy—this is urgent. All sections of the left need a common policy of opposition to the H-bomb and German rearmament, for Big Power talks and genuine negotiation and a home policy of socialist nationalisation and wages at the expense of profits, social advance paid for by reductions in military expenditure. This is the programme 'A Policy for Britain' which the Communist candidates will advance in the coming election.

Second, every Labour candidate should be made to take a stand on such a programme.

Third, the major issues of such a programme should be fought for at every trade union conference this year and carried forward into the Labour Party Conference.

Fourth, the left struggle should be widened. Instead of waiting for the next attack from the right, the counter offensive should be launched for the removal of all bans and proscriptions in the Labour Party that prohibit or impede the unity of all left forces, including the Communist Party. Everyone knows that the Communist Party and the *Daily Worker* have made a major contribution in developing the mass movement of the left in the factories and the workshops. Communists who have democratically won positions of authority in their trade unions have played a leading role in winning important unions for progressive policies. The tight grip which the right exercises with its central machine can only be defeated if it is confronted with the full united strength of the left. That strength must include the Communist Party and the *Daily Worker.*

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THE NEW CONSERVATISM

SANCHO PANZA

HEARTSEARCHINGS

In 1945 a philosophical disaster overtook the Conservative Party.—*Lord Hinchingbrooke.*

WHEN the British people in 1945 decided to give a knock-out blow to the Conservative Party, a process of heartsearchings began in the Conservative heart, which has continued to the present day. Of course the heartsearching will continue to the end, because the contents of the aged Conservative heart remain basically the same, and no amount of infusion of new blood, be it even somewhat red, will add to its contents or change the heart. To avoid misunderstanding let me state at the outset that in my opinion and, I think, also in the opinion of the conservatives themselves, the regaining of political power by the Conservative Party in 1951 was not entirely due to the outcome of heartsearchings and donning a new look, but to circumstances which had little to do with the Conservative Party.

The cause of the defeat became clear to some of the leading conservatives who found the Party ill-equipped with modern weapons necessary to meet the challenge of socialism. They found that they had nothing to offer in the way of ideals and philosophical ideas and that 'their thoughts and endeavours were concentrated on keeping the other fellow out' (Richard Law). It became essential to find a positive philosophy which could dictate their policies and get rid of the idea that 'Toryism was nothing more than anti-socialism'. Others found that it was really a mere matter of language, as the Conservative Party hadn't renewed its jargon since before the war. Others again thought that a change in the name of the Party (MacMillan) would do the trick. There were yearnings for a name which would sound more democratic. They were jealous of the continental conservatives who were able to call themselves 'Christian Democrats', 'Free Democrats', etc. A new name would have, indeed, been bewildering as the conservatives have already very many names to choose from such as tories, constitutionalists, unionists, primrose-leaguers, true-blues, tory-reformers, progressive conservatives, liberal conservatives, diehards and what not. Not to mention some unmentionable popular names. Of course, the possession of so many names has a snag—it may mean lack of unity in the conservative ranks.

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Many of the more enthusiastic and younger conservatives found fault in the composition of the Party which consisted largely of a collection of Personalities with an applauding following of landed interests, financial interests, monopoly interests, business interests and retired rich old ladies. 'If the socialists can successfully identify us with the rich and themselves with the poor then when the heads are counted they must win' complained Sir David Eccles, M.P. The demand went out to widen the social basis of the Conservative Party to include anyone 'who is able and willing to show the way up the ladder'. These could be found in the lower middle class—the black-coated workers, professional men, and expert craftsmen. Some kept their eyes even on the working man.

But a very serious cause of the decline of conservatism was found in the 'infiltration' (Boothby) into the Conservative Party of homeless Liberals who brought with them many alien, old-fashioned and destructive philosophical conceptions. The subversive activities of the erstwhile Liberals has steadily undermined the serenity and stability of the conservative position.

THE NEW LOOK

What we have to do is to convince the public that our programme amounts to something more than the dole, the quinquennial vote and recurrent world war.—*Robert Boothby.*

The search for new ideas, new faith and ideals is not an easy process for defenders of capitalism and imperialism. There aren't many ideas fit for a conservative party. But you can temporarily borrow ideas and dress up old ideas in new clothes and achieve a perfectly good and convincing New Look. This is what has happened in the Conservative Party under the pressure of ambitious, frustrated young Tories who wanted badly to climb the economic ladder, but were somewhat prevented by the Labour Government. For inspiration they turned to America, where opportunities for business success are supposed to abound; they also turned to the old Liberal Party and have even borrowed a thing or two from the Labour Party leaders.

The New Look to be acceptable to the public and capable of 'wresting initiative in the realm of political ideas from the left' (R. A. Butler) had to be a 'democratic' New Look. This meant finding new ways of expressing undemocratic capitalist principles and finding new ways to dodge the various popular conceptions of the conservatives such as 'Warmongers'. The main designers of the New Look were Sir Anthony Eden, Mr. MacMillan and Mr. R. A. Butler. All three contributed something to the democratic design. Sir Anthony Eden was very keen on the idea of 'a nation-wide

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property-owning democracy'; Mr. MacMillan, having failed to change the name of the Party, contributed 'broad democratic ideals'; and Mr. Butler, being more learned and intellectual, was concerned to 'fortify the resistance of the individual from drifting in a Marxist mass movement'.

One of the main features of the New Look is 'freedom and liberty'. It is amazing how many new lovers of freedom have emerged since 1945 in the shape of Conservative leaders, industrial magnates, financiers, business men, clubmen and country gentlemen. What a rich crop for the Council of Civil Liberties who badly need help to defend civil liberties in Britain. 'Freedom and liberty' may sound a bit odd coming from conservative lips and pens, but it is there we hear and see them most nowadays. 'Freedom of the individual', 'free society', 'free world' have become household words in the Conservative Party. 'We stand for the maximum individual liberty' Mr. Butler assures us. But what is this 'liberty' he is so keen about? Experience would hardly bear out the suggestion that he means civil liberties of the individual. The only kind of 'liberty' dear to the conservative heart is 'liberty of enterprise', that is, liberty 'to gamble to venture' (Beverley Baxter), liberty to make money and exploit other people or liberty for dogs to eat dogs. According to the conservative Industrial Charter 'Liberty of enterprise' is supposed to 'bring the best out of human nature'. As a reward for the support of 'Free enterprise' the Conservative Party promise 'protection of the individual, whether he was a money-maker or a victim of exploitation' (Richard Law).

The idea of the New Look was to achieve an entirely new and modern conservative way of life. But the New Look has been grafted on a very old true-blue conservative look of preservation of private property, of the Empire, of existing institutions, of monarchy, of the authority of the State, etc., which gives the New Look rather a mongrel character. This has provoked deep rumblings from the aged throats of respectable Tories and their offspring, who hope to regain ascendancy over their more flighty co-members.

PROPERTY-OWNING DEMOCRACY

Mr. Eden made some unexceptional remarks about a 'nation-wide property-owning democracy', but when he came to discuss how this was to be brought about he could only point to the proposals put forward by the Coalition in 1944. This negative attitude inevitably disappointed the delegates.—*Observer*, October 6, 1946.

Property-owning Democracy, or 'popular capitalism' as Sir David Eccles, M.P., prefers to call it is the goal of New Conservatism. The

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slogan is very beloved by all the big leaders of the Conservative Party, such as Churchill, Salisbury and Eden, who rarely miss an occasion to roll it on their tongues with great relish. The declaration of this goal was made by Sir Anthony Eden in the following words:

> The Conservative objective was a nation-wide property-owning democracy. We believe in the widest measure of individual capitalism.
>
> We believe that there are not too many capitalists, but too few. We believe that the existence of private property is essential to the maintenance of individual freedom.

The conception of a 'nation-wide property-owning democracy' is highly bewildering. It was too much even for some sincere conservatives. Robert Boothby wrote:

> I cannot feel that the slogan 'Every man a capitalist only not quite so big a capitalist as Stinnes, Carnegie, Krupp or Schwab' is likely to sweep the British electorate off its feet.

I wonder why the Conservative Party is shy to explain what the property-owning democracy really means? Is it because they have in mind the American ideal of equality of ownership where every worker is supposed to own a motor car and a house alongside the industrial magnates and multimillionaires and are proud of it? Or have they in mind a petty-bourgeois paradise of small allotment holders and house owners who would gratefully put their labour at the disposal of the profit-makers in addition to looking after their own property? Now that Sir Anthony Eden is Prime Minister and free from the cares of the Foreign Office, we hope that he will put his mind to solving the problem and showing us the way to achieve a 'nation-wide property-owning democracy'.

To a simple soul like Sancho it is an attractive idea to own a nice big factory and that we all should become owners and capitalists, but the question is, who should do the work for us? Is it assumed that the colonial peoples should do the work, or shall we import some poor 'free Europeans' or must we go back to the good old times, when every owner did his own work and exchanged goods with his neighbour?

To date there has been very little done towards becoming a property-owning democracy, except, perhaps, a little extension of mortgaged property holding in housing and some smallholding schemes. But all this smacks of the well known 'three acres and a cow' and 'having a stake in the country' however minute it may be.

However, we must not be impatient, because we have been told repeatedly that we must work harder and produce more before we

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can become owners and capitalists. We must also bear in mind Sir Anthony Eden's warning that

> We may find that in achieving greater material prosperity we have lost far more in matters of the spirit.

* * * * *

Whatever we may say about the Conservative Party, it has done one great service to the working-class movement by insisting on calling the Labour Party the Socialist Party, thus reminding the Labour Party what it is supposed to stand for.

PRESS LORDS AND STRIKERS

ANGELA TUCKETT

WHEN Lord Northcliffe, the 'Napoleon', or as we may say nowadays, the 'Hitler of the newspaper world', produced in his final madness of 1922 the booklet *Newspapers and their Millionaires*, he revealed what had been hidden: but on the day after his 'serious illness' was announced, the booklet was withdrawn from circulation. Now, a third of a century later, the action of a few hundred men on strike has once more lifted the curtain. Instead of the Fleet Street newspapers there is revealed the Newspaper Proprietors' Association. The character of the capitalist press has been made plain for all to see, its monopoly control and its subjection to the private policy of a handful of very rich men. These press lords who told the engineers and electricians claiming a wage advance that they could 'take it or leave it' have done more than ensure a stoppage of newspapers by their unbending attitude. They have focussed attention on monopoly control of 'the free press'.

The scope and duration of the stoppage were unprecedented. All the London daily, evening and Sunday papers whose owners are banded together in the Newspaper Proprietors' Association were stopped. Normally they circulate 50,000,000 copies in all (16,000,000 each morning, 3,000,000 each evening and 31,000,000 each Sunday). For weeks the only one of the nine daily newspapers to appear on London's streets was the only one owned and controlled by its readers—the *Daily Worker;* for this was not in the N.P.A. and not in dispute. Unfortunately the number which the

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Daily Worker was finally permitted to print was artificially restricted to under 100,000—until the 19,000,000 daily copies of the N.P.A. could once more appear. Had it been otherwise, the dispute might well have been of much shorter duration for, as the South London District Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union stated in a unanimous resolution, the publication of the *Daily Worker* 'would provide the public with the truth about the dispute . . . and also mean that the N.P.A. would be more anxious to terminate the dispute'.

The stoppage began as a perfectly normal industrial dispute over wages and collective bargaining between the N.P.A. and 700 maintenance workers, members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Electrical Trades Union. These unions are not affiliated to the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation which embraces some dozen unions of print workers proper; it is with the P.K.T.F. that the N.P.A. negotiate agreements. After the expiry in October last of a three-year agreement with the P.K.T.F., the N.P.A. announced to the London District officials of the A.E.U. and E.T.U. the new terms they proposed to give the maintenance men, but refused negotiation on them. Early in March the maintenance men's unions handed in strike notices which, after being suspended pending further abortive talks, were reinstated. The N.P.A. called in the Ministry of Labour on the eve of the strike, which took effect on Friday, March 25. Joint talks organised by the Ministry of Labour ended in deadlock. On March 29, the N.P.A. gave a fortnight's notice to 20,000 non-editorial staff in the P.K.T.F., no doubt anticipating that this would bring indirect pressure on the maintenance men. When further all-day talks were deadlocked at the Ministry on April 1, the Government hastily set up a Court of Inquiry to induce the men to return to work first—and *not* get their demand after. This move, of course, could not succeed; the A.E.U. and E.T.U. formally recognised the strike as official.

The overall loss was estimated at over £2,000,000 in the first three weeks; of this the groups owned by Lord Rothermere and Lord Beaverbrook were said to be each losing £150,000. The gap between the 700 maintenance men's claim and the N.P.A.'s offer could have been bridged by £1,580 weekly. As a Member of Parliament pointed out in the House of Commons, criticising the operation of the cartel of the N.P.A., 'the strike could be stopped tomorrow if the increases are paid pending a settlement'.

Why the obstinacy of the Press Lords?

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True, they had reason to expect that the unions within the P.K.T.F. would follow with renewed claims where the maintenance men had blazed the trail, for no print workers were satisfied with the new agreement; second largest, the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants, quickly weighed in on April 5 with a further demand and set a time limit for talks to open on it. But there were other factors at work. The periodical and provincial press provide a listening post from which we can overhear the private voice of employers talking to themselves. Take, for example, the traditionally Conservative weekly *Spectator,* which explained on April 8 that one of the reasons for the trouble was

> the bad effect of restrictive trade practices. The N.P.A. is a 'ring'; it suffers from all the defects of such bodies.

But writing in the same issue, Mr. Randolph S. Churchill let the cat out of the bag with engaging frankness. He recalled that Mr. R. W. Briginshaw, General Secretary of N.A.T.S.O.P.A., when told that the Cadbury family's *News Chronicle* was losing money already, had retorted: 'There's a lot of money in cocoa'. Mr. Churchill commented that there was no doubt that other proprietors were 'prepared to place their personal fortunes behind the fortunes of their newspapers, at any rate for the purposes of the present fight'. The half dozen men who dominate N.P.A. are not mere press tycoons with only one iron in the fire; they have many other interests to protect. Or to put it delicately, as Mr. Churchill did:

> Nearly all the proprietors have large fortunes quite independent of the newspaper business. The roll call is impressive. Colonel John Jacob Astor (New York real estate), Lord Beaverbrook (cement, cinemas and public utilities), Lord Rothermere (newsprint and large trust funds created by his father, the first Viscount in Canada and South Africa), Lord Camrose and Mr. Michael Berry (the resources of the Amalgamated Press, together with enormous trust funds created by their father).

These account for *The Times* and *Observer, Daily Express, Daily Mail* and *Sketch, Telegraph* and *Sunday Times*—with the other weekend, evening and Sunday stable companions.

He continued the 'impressive roll call' by pointing out that the *Daily Mirror* group, of which Lord Rothermere's cousin, Mr. Cecil Harmsworth King, is chairman, have 'an estimated income of more than £600,000 from their investment in the newsprint firm of Albert E. Reed'. He glanced at Lord Kemsley's vast number of provincial papers, 'coining money during the past 12 months', of which the *Sheffield Telegraph* alone made £400,000. He concluded:

> Money talks and it can be taken for granted that it will not be lack of money which will force concessions from the proprietors.

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It was known, and covertly admitted, in Fleet Street circles that not all the members of the N.P.A. were so content with the intransigence of the giant interests which dominate it. Early there were rumours of the impending break-up of the N.P.A. by some of the smaller owners breaking away from the 'ring', coming to terms with the men and resuming printing. Certainly the maintenance men's leaders made it clear throughout that they were ready to meet any owner prepared to negotiate, and return to work. References were common to the fine sense of 'fair play' exhibited by those who would not 'take advantage' of those proprietors who would not budge and so remained struck. That weeks passed without the cracks in the N.P.A. widening to a breach may have been due rather more to the fact that a substantial fine of several thousand pounds each day would fall upon 'defaulting' owners who printed in defiance of the N.P.A.'s dictatorship.

There is indeed a lunatic fringe amongst the ruling class; the last lunatic in control of Big Business concerns did not pass with the late Lord Northcliffe. There was the bland announcement on April 18, the eve of the Budget, in a single news bulletin of the B.B.C.—not repeated—of a band of unnamed sponsors who proposed to form at once 'a Free Press Company', owning up-to-date presses and employing only men who guaranteed never in any circumstances to strike. Motive of these sponsors was that 'the control of the press is now passing into the hands of a few trade union leaders'. While they would not normally publish, they would hold presses and staff ready at the disposal of owners whose papers were stopped; including, graciously, 'organs of the Labour Party and the trade unions, but not the Communist Party'. There was correspondence in the provincial press calling for a state of emergency to be called by the Tory Government to be followed, presumably, by some pale counterpart of Sir Winston Churchill's *British Gazette* of the General Strike days. A fine way for the Tories to lose more, perhaps, than an election.

At this stage, however, it was preferred to place hopes in the result of the Court of Inquiry.

At the two-day Court of Inquiry, which opened on April 6, Lord Rothermere was present as Chairman of the N.P.A.; evidence, however, was given by his lieutenant, Lord Burnham, chairman of the labour committee, who described the N.P.A.'s idea of collective bargaining. Their practice was to fix a 'global sum', inform the P.K.T.F., and leave those unions to divide it up amongst them according to 'time-honoured differentials'; after which, the mainten-

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ance men in the A.E.U. and E.T.U., were told what was coming to them. Spokesman for the electrician maintenance men was Mr. Frank Foulkes, President of the E.T.U. He said that the maintenance men's claim would raise basic wages to 125 per cent. over 1939, instead of the present 76 per cent. He justified it on four grounds: comparison with major industries; post-1939 cost of living rises; higher technical qualifications and skill to cope with new techniques; and increased profitability. As to the N.P.A.'s methods, the unions were not only concerned with dividing Lord Burnham's 'global sum', but with discussing how big it should be. Profits before tax of some 74 companies were 11 per cent. higher than in 1953, he explained. For the engineer maintenance men, Mr. J. R. Scott, of the A.E.U. executive, pointed out that these were amongst the most highly skilled engineers in the country, and their standard of living had now fallen well behind skilled engineers in other industries. The N.P.A.'s methods did not constitute negotiation; they had merely stated that they could not increase the offer without disturbing a wage structure over which the maintenance men's unions had no control.

When a week later the Inquiry's report was issued on April 13, it was seen to be farcically remote from the realities—as remote as it was close to the N.P.A.'s case. Even the *Manchester Guardian*, finding it most 'useful' in that it 'put the blame for the stoppage on the shoulders of the engineers' and electricians' unions', and declared their claim 'unrealistic', observed that

> the report does not favour the unions. No striker likes to be told to return to work on the basis of the employer's offer, the supposed basis of which is what he is striking about. . . . The Court's principal recommendation—the establishment of a central negotiating body representing all the unions—was, in fact, substantially put forward by the N.P.A. during the public hearing.

Next day notices of 20,000 print workers took effect; a mass meeting of maintenance men voted to stay out. The deadlock was complete, as the stoppage went into its fourth week.

Meantime, life went on. No longer able to buy their habitual choices, readers of the fifty million circulated sheets found they could do without them. People were even heard to say 'It is not a bad thing we have no papers', or 'we're enjoying this freedom from the press'. Able to get essential news in other ways, they found themselves no longer dependent for their amusement on the products of the N.P.A. If the press monopolists had provided what the newspapers ought to be—and could be, in a free socialist society

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—the deprivation would have been felt as very serious. As it was, attention began to turn to the proprietors, to the purposes of those proprietors and to the policies to which, in mockery of any 'public opinion', they nailed both editors and staff. It became clear that the millionaire press Lords were able to lose lots of money without turning a hair, *provided* they could keep their individual, private, anti-social and anti-democratic control of news policy, so as to maintain at all costs the rule of finance-capital.

The maintenance men, supported by the main body of print workers, in the course of simply defending their standard of living, have started something. The strike has momentarily lifted the lid off the Fleet Street cauldron.

TSARISM, NATIONALISM AND SOCIALISM

BRIAN PEARCE

THE copy of the Republic's Constitution with which I was presented when visiting the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of Northern Ossetia in December, 1953, opens by recalling that the Soviet order was set up in that little Caucasian country after 'the Ossetian people had been liberated from national oppression by Tsarism and the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the nationalist counter-revolution had been routed'.* It is sometimes forgotten that opposition to socialism in the borderlands of Russia was conducted very largely under slogans of enmity to all things Russian, including (and indeed especially) the Russian working class and everything connected with it. The spirit of this opposition was the same as that shown in Arthur Griffith's attack on 'the red banner of English Socialism' at the time of the Dublin General Strike of 1913. (And in the Tsarist Empire just as in his case, those whose nationalism flared brightest in conflict with the workers' movement were often the very ones to make a deal with imperialism at the expense of their own people; *e.g.*, the Ukrainian nationalists in relation to Pilsudski's Poland and Hitler's Germany.) Because in Central Russia the working class was larger, older, more politically conscious, better organised and had greater influence over the

*See *A People Reborn : The Story of N. Ossetia*, ed. A. Rothstein (1954).

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peasantry than was the case in the borderlands, it was the latter that became the chief target for activity by anti-Soviet agents. Hitlerite Germany strove to stir up anti-Russian sentiments in the Ukraine, the Caucasus and elsewhere. American-sponsored propaganda directed to the Soviet Union ever since the 'cold war' began has devoted special attention to the fanning of hatred between nations and in particular between the Russians and the rest. One of the charges against Beria in July, 1953, it will be recalled, was that he had attempted 'to activise bourgeois nationalist elements in the Union republics'.

A field in which hostile forces, ousted from the main arena of struggle, tried for a long time to continue disruptive activity in the U.S.S.R. was the writing and teaching of history. In a number of Republics they took advantage of the thorough-going efforts made under the leadership of the Communist Party to eliminate all traces of Great-Russian jingoism, in order to secure acceptance of a version of history which distorted it in the opposite direction. Citizens of Georgia, or Daghestan, or Kazakhstan, etc., were led to infer from the way their history was presented to them, that the worst moment in the life of their respective peoples came when they began to have to do with the Russians, that the record of this association was predominantly one of misfortunes so far as the non-Russians were concerned; that they had enjoyed a 'golden age' before the Russians came into their lives; and that the greatest heroes in their national tradition were those who had led anti-Russian wars and revolts, a 'single stream' of which, all just and liberationist in character, flowed from the earliest times down to 1917, if not later. Since the mid-thirties and more especially since the War, a determined effort has been made in the U.S.S.R. to correct such nationalistic misinterpretations of history. This, in turn, has evoked in recent years a howl of indignation from enemies of the U.S.S.R. who claim that Soviet historiography now whitewashes Tsarist colonial policy and blackens all who ever opposed it. Propaganda on these lines is used to confuse those intellectuals in colonial countries who are becoming increasingly interested in Soviet progress, as well as anti-imperialists generally.

The initiative in the fight against nationalistic perversions of history has come to a great extent not from 'Moscow' in the first place, but from Communists in the non-Russian republics themselves. There, workers striving to lead their peoples forward along the road to Communism have found that the cherishing of such

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customs as child-marriage, polygamy or the wearing of the veil is linked with a certain conception of history—an idealising of the patriarchal and feudal, superstition-ridden past, 'before the Russians came'. Soviet historians have not been concerned in their campaign against such ideas to glorify any Tsars or Russian Governors-General but rather to strip false glory from certain Sultans, Khans, etc., who have been held up for admiration as fighters for the rights of their peoples but whom closer inspection shows to have been working for their own ends to bring these peoples under the rule of Turkey or Persia, which would have been an unmitigated disaster for them. (Ossetians, Georgians and other Caucasian peoples, for instance, have reason to be glad that Shamil, the fanatical bandit leader who from the thirties to the fifties of last century fought a 'holy war' from the mountains with Turkish and British backing, did *not* emerge victorious over his Russian foes. That would have meant, in all probability, that these peoples would have shared the fate of the Armenians under Turkish rule; or, at least, that the sphere of operations of Shamil's principal supporters, the chieftains who supplied Circassian slave-girls—and boys—to the markets of Istanbul would have been extended at their expense.)

Far from all 'native' rebels against Tsardom being denigrated, however, it is in recent years that especial honour has been paid to the memory of such historical figures as Salavat Yulayev, who led the oppressed Bashkir people to the aid of Pugachev when the Russian peasants rebelled under his leadership against their feudal lords in the seventeen-seventies, and Amangeldy Imanov, the Kazakh who roused his people to revolt in 1916—and was duly murdered, when the Kazakh rebellion merged soon afterward with the all-Russian Revolution, by the nationalist 'Alash-Orda' group. What Soviet historians now insist on doing where the history of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. is concerned, is applying the Marxist principle of examining every movement, wars and revolts included, in the light of its actual circumstances—what gave rise to it, who led it, who took part in it, who opposed it, what were the results of its success or failure and what would have ensued from a different outcome, etc.—instead of applying a standard formula which exempts one from either research or thought.

The evil deeds of Tsardom in the non-Russian, as in the Russian parts of the former Empire, are in no way glossed over. But emphasis is now laid on the fact that the non-Russian peoples came into contact not with one Russia only, but with *two Russias,* not

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only with Tsars and bureaucrats, but also with progressive intellectuals and class-conscious workers; and attention is mainly directed to the more positive aspect of the association between the peoples. If the link with Russia was a factor for progress in the history of the Ukraine, as was stressed in the celebration in 1954 of its 300th anniversary,* how much more was this the case with a nomad people like the Kazakhs. To them exiled Russian revolutionaries such as Mikhaelis brought the democratic culture of 'unofficial' Russia, the ideas of Belinsky and Herzen, Chernyshevsky and Dobrolyubov, and stimulated the development of the first native writers and educators —Chokan Velikanov, geographer and historian of his country, Ibrai Altynsarin, who composed the first Kazakh alphabet based on Russian characters, and Abai Kunanbayev, founder of the Kazakh literary language. (It was Abai who advised his people: 'Study the learning of the Russians—science, knowledge, inventions, art—the Russians have all these. To avoid evil and achieve good you must know the Russian language and Russian culture. The Russians see the world. If you learn their language the world will open before your eyes.') Russian settlers—most of whom were not kulaks but poor and middle peasants—and workers on the railways introduced the practice and theory of struggle against tyrants of all kinds and nationalities. And association with Russia was sought by some of the Kazakh tribes, in any case, as the only means of coping with the raids of the Kalmucks and the slave-getting expeditions sent among them by the despots of Khiva, Bukhara and Kokand.

Soviet historians are working out in detail the implications of Engels' remarks in his letter to Marx of May 23, 1851:

> Russia . . . is really progressive in relation to the East . . . Russian domination is a civilising element on the Black Sea and the Caspian, and in Central Asia and among the Bashkirs and Tatars. . . .†

Lenin wrote in his *Development of Capitalism in Russia* of how 'Russian capitalism drew the Caucasus'—a region 'populated by mountaineers who lived out of the course of world economy and even out of the course of history'—

> into the sphere of world commodity circulation, obliterated its local peculiarities (the remnants of ancient patriarchal isolation) and *created for itself* a market for its goods. . . . Simultaneously with the growth of the colonisation of the Caucasus and the accelerated growth of its agricultural population there was also a process . . . of attraction of the agricultural population into industry. . . . The same thing has taken place and is taking place in Central Asia, Siberia, etc.‡

*See S.C.R. History Bulletin, Vol. I, No. 2, article: *Soviet Historians on Russo-Ukrainian*

†*Selected Correspondence*, p. 37.

‡*Selected Works*, 12-vol. edition, Vol. I, p. 378.

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In Central Asia during the Middle Ages highly civilised states had flourished, centres of the world culture of their time, producing men like the Tadjik Ibn Sina (Avicenna), the great pioneer of scientific medicine whose 1,000th anniversary (according to the Mohammedan calendar) was commemorated not long ago in the U.S.S.R. and elsewhere. From the sixteenth century onward, however, this region fell into a prolonged decline, as a result of the change in world trade-routes and the effects of a series of destructive nomadic invasions. Society reverted to more primitive levels and ceased even to maintain, let alone to develop, its cultural heritage. From this situation (unforgettably depicted by Sadriddin Aini in his memoirs*) the entry of the Russians began to rescue Central Asia in the second half of last century. Like the other borderlands it was drawn into the all-Russian network of economic and social relations, and such peoples as the Uzbeks and Turkmenians took their first steps along the road to nationhood, which they fully attained only after the October Revolution.

Enormously important for the development of the relations between the Russian and non-Russian peoples of the Tsarist Empire was the fact of geographical contiguity and continuity between them. Russia was a multi-national country from the earliest times. Russian settlers lived as neighbours of the Ossetians, Kabardians and other North Caucasian peoples from the sixteenth century onwards and were introducing agriculture into Siberia so early as the seventeenth century. Anna Pankratova, in her book *The Great Russian People*, observes:

> Unlike the proletariat of Western Europe, the Russian working class developed in a country where there was no such territorial separation between Central Russia and the non-Russian borderlands as there was, for instance between Great Britain and her colonies. As capitalism developed in Russia it penetrated the borderlands as well, and this led to the formation of the first groups of a native proletariat in these regions. The proletariat of the main industrial regions—the Donbas, Baku, etc.—was was extremely mixed in national composition, but the most highly-qualified and conscious section were the Russian workers, here as in Central Russia. In the process of production and of joint class struggle, the workers of the different nationalties drew near to each other and established even closer mutual relations.

On the same point, a British writer, Mrs. N. Holdsworth, discussing in *Soviet Studies* the position of Russian workers in Central Asia before the Revolution, writes:

> Labour disputes on a considerable scale (particularly in the railway yards) had arisen at intervals, in which Russian and indigenous workers

*A section was published under the title *Bukhara* in *Soviet Literature*, No. 9 of 1953.

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had formed one side and managements the other. . . . At no time in the history of Russian colonisation had class cleavage followed the lines of difference in race. . . .

A different angle on this question, that of the native feudalists and capitalists, is given in a document written in 1920 by the Tatar bourgeois-nationalist Validov:

The land question in the East has, in principle, produced no class distinction. For in the East it is the European Russians, whether capitalists or workers, who are the top class, while the people of the soil (*sic*), rich or poor, are their slaves. Why should there be any distinction of class between those who have the land cultivated (!) and those who do the work?

Russians are proud of the absence of colour-prejudice from their national traditions and of the fact that jingoism and ideas of national superiority have never infected their intelligentsia and in particular their progressive people to any considerable degree. From Radishchev in the eighteenth century onward, all the revolutionary democrats whom the Russian people produced summoned them to struggle for freedom and equality of all the nations of the Empire. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the Russian workers came forward as the *leaders* of the fight against Tsarist oppression alike of Russians and non-Russians; and this was the background of Lenin's advice to the Ukrainians in his 1913 article *Critical Notes on the National Question:*

If the majority of the Ukrainian workers are under the influence of Great-Russian culture we know for certain that, side by side with the ideas of Great-Russian priestly and bourgeois cultures there are also at work the ideas of Great-Russian democracy and social-democracy. Fighting against the first kind of 'culture', the Ukrainian *Marxist* will always distinguish it from the second culture and say to his fellow-workers: 'Every opportunity of contact with the Great-Russian class-conscious worker, with his literature, with his outlook, must be seized with all energy, utilised and consolidated. For this is required by the vital interests of *both* the Ukrainian *and* the Russian workers' movement.' If the Ukrainian Marxist allows himself to be stampeded by *quite legitimate and natural* hatred of the Great-Russian oppressors into transferring even a tiny part of that hatred—even in the form of estrangement—to the proletarian culture and proletarian cause of the Great-Russian workers, that Marxist will slip down into the morass of bourgeois nationalism.

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Book Reviews

MILITANT MARXISM

Dialectical Materialism. Vol. III. The Theory of Knowledge, by Maurice Cornforth. (240 pp. Lawrence & Wishart. *10s. 6d.*)

THIS third volume both completes Cornforth's account of the basic ideas of Marxist philosophy and at the same time forms a separate study in which the principles of dialectical and historical materialism are applied to a special subject, the development of human consciousness. The author takes for the scope of his book the theory of knowledge, in a wide sense. In three sections he covers a variety of questions connected with ideas: (1) their origin in the mind and the development of thought and language; (2) the way ideas reflect reality, especially ideologies and science; (3) truth, knowledge and freedom.

At first sight it may seem that there is little justification for a textbook separating these subjects into a special volume. Marxists have usually divided the study of the world outlook of Marxism into two parts, dialectical materialism dealing with the basic dialectical, materialist approach to the phenomena of nature, and historical materialism dealing with the application of these principles to human society. Accordingly it would be natural to include some of the material of this volume, for instance much of the first section as well as the basic theory of knowledge, in the volume on dialectical materialism, while at least part of the material on ideologies and their role in social life is bound to be considered in any volume on historical materialism.

There is, therefore, a slight overlapping with the first two volumes. But the more one studies this third volume, the more valuable does the author's special treatment of the subject appear. It is particularly interesting because it is much less a re-writing of rather familiar textbook ideas than a special study with a unity of its own, dealing in easily understood language and with vivid illustration with many questions of current practical importance for the working-class movement. The author is a skilled expositor and he has the gift of making a difficult subject seem simple. His reasoning is so clear that it is difficult not to be convinced by what he writes.

It is noticeable that, while exposing the roots of capitalist ideas and the illusions of bourgeois ideologies, Cornforth refrains from abstract discussion of the views of bourgeois philosophers. In dealing with the theory of knowledge, for instance, he does not examine their views on epistomology, psycho-physical parallelism, the theory of 'hieroglyphs', etc. In such a volume this may seem an omission, but for the author's purpose it is sufficient to indicate the falsity of any such abstract approach, while concentrating on the task of showing how ideas actually arise in the concrete conditions of human society.

Similarly, in an interesting section on logic, he does not deal with the views of bourgeois philosophers, even the irrationalists who would dispense with it, rightly stressing that the laws of thought or principles of logic are not part of a superstructure and that therefore 'new views do not give rise to a new logic, any more than they give rise to a new language'. It would, perhaps, have been useful to explain the use commonly made of the terms dialectical logic as opposed to formal logic, as well as to expand a little his statement that 'what is here said about logic does not apply to the philosophical views expounded by those who have written books about logic'.

In general, the main illustrations from everyday experience that the

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author uses in confirmation of his propositions are simple and telling, but on page 202, in dealing with necessity and accident, he chooses a bad example in saying that the size of the earth is due to accidental, inessential circumstances as opposed to the necessary features of the solar system. The regular gradation in the size of the planets could just as well be regarded as a necessary feature.

The last portion of the book, with its far-reaching discussion of freedom and morality, and its stirring conclusion on the cultural heritage of mankind that the working class is called upon to defend and carry forward against its betrayal by capitalism, is a fitting climax to a study of militant Marxism that is of real service to the labour movement.

CLEMENS DUTT

GREEK SATIRIST

Aristophanes: Two Plays. A new translation by Doros Alastos. (146 pp. Zeno. *10s. 6d.*)

'THE bourgeoisie have raised monuments to the classics, if they had read them, they would have burned them.' Since Frederick Engels made that somewhat wry comment, the bourgeoisie have had time to catch up on their reading and have attempted to clean up the library shelves by consigning a number of works by classical writers to the flames. The large-scale burning of books initiated by the Nazis in the 'thirties has now become part of the American way of life and as recently as February, 1955, British newspapers reported that the American Postal Authorities had ushered in the new year by burning imported copies of a twenty-three-hundred year old play—the *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes. This is not the first time that witch-hunters have attempted to exorcise the ghost of literature's most outstanding fighter for peace; the list of places in which performances of Aristophanes' plays have been proscribed during the last two decades reads like an international gazetteer.

Nine of the eleven extant comedies of Aristophanes were written during the long agony of the Peloponnesian War; three of them have for their theme, the struggle for peace and all of them are concerned with the cause of social justice. Had Aristophanes been concerned merely in exposing the evils and horrors of war he would have been a significant enough dramatist; but he goes much further, he examines the causes of war, lays the blame where it properly belongs—on the heads of greedy and power-crazed representatives of the ruling class, and finally he urges the people themselves to take matters into their own hands. 'Only then', he says, 'will there be peace'. It is the ordinary people who are the real heroes of Aristophanes' plays, the housewives, the farmers, the impoverished citizens and it is they who offer the constructive solutions to the problems raised in the plays. Lysistrata, in the play of that name, argues the cause of peace in terms which must have been familiar to every woman in Greece and which, even today, are astonishingly relevant. Addressing the Commissioner, a representative of the war party, she says:

> If only you would have sense enough to deal with political affairs in the same way as we deal with our wool! . . . First, as we deal with the wool *i.e.*, put it into a washing-tub, scour it and clean off the grease, so we will clean the city of all filth and kick out the evil-doers. And in the same way as we pick the burrs out and beat the wool with sticks to soften it, so we must do away with all those who make the city impure with their cliques, that is to say, the groups of ambitious

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men and the plotters who conspire to win office and power. All these we shall treat as we treat the clotted parts of the wool. Then in the same way as we comb it, card it and put it in the basket, so we shall make a city of good fellowship, where all the inhabitants, citizens, strangers, visitors, become one undivided community, owing allegiance to the common weal. As the wool is made up into one ball, so all these will be joined up into one body. And, by Zeus, we must not forget the other cities all over the land, which happen to be our colonies. They are shreds and bits of wool that are left isolated and uncared for. We must find the ends of these separate threads, draw them together, wind the lot into one large hank and so be able to weave a cloak of comfort for all our people.

Using the extremely flexible framework of the Old Comedy, a framework based on the primitive satires and popular folk rituals in which poetry, song and dance were combined, Aristophanes produced a series of comedies, the power and skill of which are matched only by the best works of Moliere and Ben Jonson. The characters of Aristophanes' plays are, on the one hand, the generals, the corrupt politicians, the war-profiteers, the shield and spear makers, the black-market operators and all those who prey on the people in time of war; on the other hand, there are the soldiers who fight and die, the women who are expected to suffer the evils and privations of war in silence, the bankrupt farmers and the citizens driven half-crazy with monstrous taxes, proclamations, ordinances and fines. For the former group Aristophanes has only hatred and contempt, he subjects them to a flood of coruscating satire and merciless invective; for the others, the soldiers, the lonely women, for the great mass who do not benefit from war he has love, tenderness and a magnificent belief in their capacity to change society.

The warmongers are attacked both generally and specifically and not even the charge of high treason, occasioned by the production of *The Babylonians*—a play directed against the current war hysteria and the policy of the ruling party, could muzzle Aristophanes; in the face of the most powerful opposition he continued to attack the imperialists and, in particular, to castigate as an enemy of the people, General Cleon, apostle of genocide and arch-priest of Athenian imperialist expansion. It is doubtful whether any other politician has ever suffered the same degree of exposure that Cleon did at the hands of Aristophanes; his smallest public utterances are held up to ridicule and he is exposed as a fool; his rhetoric is ex-

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amined and he is exposed as a windbag; his statesmanship is analysed and he is exposed as a gangster; his financial dealings are investigated and he is shown to be a crook. So that there should be no mistake about his attitude, Aristophanes then proceeds to deal with the demagogue as a human being by exposing his personal habits, his frailties and his vices. It is not surprising that no actor dared to play the role of Cleon on the stage and that, consequently, Aristophanes had to play it himself.

But it is not the 'noble anger' alone which has kept the plays of Aristophanes alive for more than two thousand years, for this anger is merely the reverse side of a tremendous capacity for living and for enjoying life. His panegyrics on the subject of peace, which are to be found in *Lysistrata* and in *Peace* are some of the most joyous passages in the whole of literature. It is fitting that these two plays, embodying so many facets of Aristophanes' work, should have been published now, for they were never needed more. Doros Alastos can be congratulated for having made two fine translations and written a preface which will undoubtedly help to win a large new audience for the work of the theatre's greatest satirist. The translations are not only eminently readable but, what is more important, they would play remarkably well. Their production on the English stage is long overdue.

EWAN MACCOLL

EASTERN EUROPE

Eastern Europe in the Socialist World, by Hewlett Johnson. (280 pp. Lawrence & Wishart. *12s. 6d.*)

IT is a significant fact that the moment of Sir Winston Churchill's speech translating all the animosity of his Fulton tirade into the realities of nuclear weapons, should also be the moment of the publication of the Dean of Canterbury's book describing what it is that Sir Winston fears. Previously, in a world best seller, the Dean has given us in *The Socialist Sixth of the World,* the finest introduction to Soviet life that has yet been written; again, after an epic campaign of denigration following his return from China, he gave us *China's New Creative Age,* a first-class assessment of the New China. Now in *Eastern Europe in the Socialist World* he does the same for the New Democracies of Eastern Europe. There is a mass of information in this book. History jostles economics, geography vies with politics, reminiscence runs side by side with reporting. Already the book has been criticised by those who can see nothing good in Eastern Europe, indeed who cannot see Eastern Europe at all, as yet another example of the 'rose-coloured spectacles' worn by Canterbury's Dean. They could not be more wrong as any reader of this book will see, for the Dean approaches each of these countries in turn with the spirit and outlook of one who has a realistic faith in humanity and can therefore see both the possibilities for good and ill of which mankind is capable.

There is no pretence in this book that Eastern Europe is simply a vast extension of Bulgaria's rose cultivation. On the contrary, careful mention is made of the distance there is to travel and the tensions and struggles which the change of society has produced, as well as the mistakes made by governments and peoples. But this, of course, is not stated alone. It is presented as only a part of a vast canvas, in which the outstanding features are the great developments taking place in industry, in agriculture, in the political structure of society and in human relations. It is 'eighty million people on the move'

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that the book successfully introduces to the reader. The author's own approach is made very clear in the final section of the book when he turns from a series of separate countries to sum up the whole in terms of 'humanity triumphant'. Then he talks of a freedom based on material development, of a growing democracy, of people growing with it and morality growing too as it leaves behind the shackles of competitive capitalism. Finally, he makes it abundantly clear why, as a Christian, he must support the progress he has described. This is a book which is an expressive tribute both to its author and the people and systems he describes. It merits a massive readership.

STANLEY EVANS

VESTED INTERESTS

Monopoly—A Study of British Monopoly Capitalism, by S. Aaronovitch. (191 pp. Lawrence & Wishart. *9s. 6d.*)

THIS is the fullest study of British monopoly capitalism yet published. What has been available up till now has dealt mostly with the more superficial questions of monopolies and the consumer, not with the fundamental problem of monopoly capital and the class struggle. Bourgeois theory has conveniently lost itself in abstract mathematical arguments about the economic behaviour of monopolists in the market. Aaronovitch's book, on the other hand, is firmly grounded in reality both when describing the structure of British monopoly capitalism and when it tackles the theoretical questions. It can be divided into three main parts. First it describes the growth and scope of financial and industrial monopoly in Britain. The mass of evidence produced is the result of considerable research and explodes many of the current myths about the

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'mixed economy', the power of the small shareholder, and the 'managerial revolution'. There is no escaping the conclusion that after six post-war years of Labour Government monopoly capital still retains its stranglehold on the British economy. The central section of the book deals with the modern stage of monopoly capitalism where big business has become integrated with the state machine and the policies of the monopolies are openly identified with the 'national interest'. The final chapters are concerned with policies for breaking the power of the monopolies, not by endless Commission reports, but through socialist nationalisation carried out by a People's Government. This is an important book. Capitalism has reached a stage where monopoly is the dominant form and the monopolists are seeking to increase their influence over foreign as well as economic policy. The chapters analysing state monopoly capitalism and social democratic perversions of socialist principles are particularly valuable.

R.F.

TRAVELLER IN CHINA

Letters from a Visitor to China, by Joan Robinson. (34 pp. Students Bookshop Ltd., Cambridge. *2s. 6d.*)

JOAN ROBINSON'S is a gem of a booklet. Her narrative of a visit to U.S.S.R., witty as it was, gave no foretaste of the exceptional merit of these anecdotal letters. By now many visitors have given their witness upon China, some weighty, some stodgy, some meritorious as to description, some painstaking as to fairness, some moving in experience. Yet all their pages do not outweigh the graphic, honest interpretative simplicity of Mrs. Robinson's account of the moral and emotional impact of China on a female don. Writing the last words of the last letter, she says 'I suppose I must prepare to meet sceptical smiles at home. It is more inconvenient to be disbelieved when you are lying, but more annoying when you are not'. Believe you me —you may believe this booklet. But your loss if you miss reading it will be greater than any annoyance she has to suffer from incredulity from those who habitually find it hard to believe what is 'too good to be true'.

I.M.

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was an election number, in the sense of pin-pointing the basic questions before Britain today, it was the April L.M., with R.P.D.'s *H-Bomb, Labour and Communism* and D. N. Pritt's *Election Prospects*. Readers were not slow to see the value of reaching new people with it, as part of pre-election campaigning. Many were moved to drop in a donation 'towards the fine job you are doing'. (*Notts*); and because it 'has been doubly welcome this month, with the great shut-down of national newspapers'. (*Dundee*). One *Middlesex* trade union branch secretary rushed us money out of his own pocket for copies to be sent direct to his members. The specimen copy and Midget forms on the back cover were freely used too. Writes a *Scots railwayman*: 'The importance of L.M. in the hands of the working masses becomes ever more clear to me as I digest it each month.' Another *Scot* thinks the Midget L.M. 'important for spreading the message as widely as as possible'. We repeat: *we are always ready to circularise branches with it. Just ask.*

Does the American press ever disclose the opposition here to German rearmament, as expressed in the Easter resolutions of the Engineering Draughtsmen, the Shop Assistants (who called it 'a deadly menace to peace'), the Co-operative Party and the Clerks? Judging by how little the British press tells us of American progressives—not much. So I was interested in this from an American reader: 'Most unfortunately official Britain and France, having turned themselves into subalterns of aggressive American imperialism, condescendingly yield to its determination to carry on the militaristic ideology spelled out by Nazis like Goering at Freiburg, May 10, 1935, boasting: 'I repeat what I have already explained before the foreign press; we have done the most important thing in the world: we have rearmed." And by Goebbels: "We believe in force. The fact that we have the strongest army is a security against war." In Cologne, May 19, 1939.' Thanks, friend, for reminding us of those quotations.

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